Follow the Raven

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Follow the Raven

by Moonstruckidiot

Summary

A little continuation of the Pub at the end of the Road

With the help of Rob the Raven Will returns to the Stag's Head for a doggy play date between Winston and Co and Hannibal's dogs Abel and Cain

Probably best to have read Pub at the end of the Road otherwise it wont make much sense.

Notes

No Beta

There will be at the most three chapters to this fic

Will is a little OC there are reasons but it will not be revealed why in this fic. - it may be a tale of another time

I may write more in this AU

Thanks to everyone who left kudos etc on Pub at the end of the Road

See the end of the work for more notes

Chapter 1

It had been four days since Will met Hannibal. Now he stands at a crime scene, he's having trouble making the pendulum swing, but at this precise moment his body and mind are more responsive to the vibration in his trouser pocket. His fingers twitch and, however unprofessional it might be, reach for his phone.

- I'm looking forward to seeing you at the weekend. Don't leave the house until you receive instructions. I'll text you Sunday. P.S. bring some grapes, preferably red. HL

Will's lips rise slightly at the corners, hardly noticeable really but a smile from the profiler is so rare its always noteworthy. Brian, Jimmy and Beverley all stop and, as if by some telepathic group message, 'Hmm' at the same time.

"Clear the scene," demands a clear and authoritative voice, and a dozen or so tech's and cops pack up and move sharpish. Only one man remains and he's currently gazing at his phone butterflies taking flight in his stomach. *Graham*, he mentally reprimands himself, *your not a teenage girl, pull yourself together*. Agreed, but he currently does feel like a rather giddy thirty something year old man.

"Will, focus", says Jack whilst sheparding everyone back, "on the dead body." He takes a deep breath and doing his best to hide his exasperation, but its a real struggle, he'll clearly have to hit a tree in a minute, "Not at your phone."

"OK, Jack," responds Will, coming out of what looks to be a daze. He turns towards the body, but he hasn't quite wiped off the slight grin and the gleam to his eyes.

"Will," Bev takes a step forward, "who sent the te..." She doesn't have the opportunity to finish her question as a large hand is placed over her mouth and she is firmly but gently pulled back to stand with the others.

....

It's noon on Sunday and Will has yet to hear from Hannibal, the keen fly fisherman drums his fingers on his hobby table. He's not made any lures, more messes of feather and twine. *Maybe Hannibal changed his mind, maybe he had an accident*, maybe, maybe, maybe. By twenty to three a headache is definitely brewing so Will gets up to pour himself a glass of water. Then just as he raises the glass to his mouth the quiet is interrupted by the, not so familiar, sound of a text arriving. His shoulders jump slightly and he almost drops the glass, fortunately its just clear liquid that runs down his chin and drips onto his shirt.

- Did you get the grapes? HL

- Yes, is everything OK I was expecting a text earlier

- Just follow the Raven

What? Thinks Will forehead crinkling as he walks towards his front door, he tentatively opens it and there on the rail is a big bird, a fucking big, black bird. It turns and looks at him and all Will can think to say is, “I’ll be out in two minutes.” He raises two fingers just to make sure the bird understands, because honestly that wouldn’t be the weirdest thing he’s experienced in his life. It nods, of course it does, and what else can one do in these circumstances except say, “Thank you for your patience.” Will then turns to close the door but just before he does he retrieves a grape from the bunch he has in his bag and places one just in front of the Raven, quick-ish just in case.

After gathering everyone together and putting the bottle of wine he bought into his bag, Will and his pack set off across the fields near his house following the Raven as it flies. It’s a polite bird stopping every once in a while on a high tree branch to make sure they are keeping up. *Harry Potter* thinks Will, *Harry Bloody Potter, that’s who I am*. He hopes he and his pack don’t just suddenly appear amongst the crush of commuters on the London Underground, because seriously it wouldn’t surprise him.

Fortunately there is no train to catch or dragon to ride, just a path through the wood and over a bridge and they arrive outside the Stag’s Head. It had taken a three hour car ride to get home when he stayed at Hannibal’s last week, it's three o clock now, the maths doesn’t fit. Hannibal awaits them with Abel and Cain at his feet, the boys rise to a sitting position as Will’s pack approach but they make no motion to stand. Winston, Buster and the crew are excited but cautious at the sight of the two large canines. They come to a stop lined up like two sides in a medieval battle, eyeing each other up.

Then the Raven descends into the middle ground, Abel and Cain turn their heads away perhaps unwilling to catch the eye of the bird.

“This is Rob,” says Hannibal introducing the Raven, “was he a good guide?”

“Yes, he was very good” replies Will smiling.

Rob hops towards Hannibal who squats down and offers the bird some small strips of meat before asking, “Would you like a stroke?” the bird nods and, however unlikely it might be, leans into the touch.

“If you give him a grape he’ll let you stroke him, but only twice though no more, no less otherwise he will bite.”

“Thank you Rob,” Will says as he moves to kneel on the floor whilst holding out a grape. He holds his breath then looks at Hannibal grinning when his fingers touch smooth, silky feathers.

“He’ll go back to his aviary and return later to guide you home.”

Its Buster, the little terrier, who breaks the deadlock between the canines he charges out from behind Will’s legs and tail wagging runs straight up to Abel. Barking loudly and to-ing and fro-ing he dares a chase from the much bigger dog. The chase loving hound scuttles himself round to sit directly in front of Hannibal and tilting his head, just so, he stares at his master with large red unblinking eyes, his reward is a smile and a motion of fingers to ‘Go play.’

Chapter 2

Chapter Summary

Will, and his dogs, have a date with Hannibal, and his dogs. Will is his normal suave and sophisticated self - No, not really :) - Will is a bit hesitant but Hannibal is patient and they have a nice time.

Chapter Notes

So I'm a bit nervous about posting this, I hope no one is too disappointed

I found it difficult writing this, mostly because I have quite a well worked out idea, currently in my head, for a third fic in this series and I have wanted to connect both stories together. So there are elements, and plot in this story, which will be explained in the next, but I hope it doesn't mean readers are left too confused. I still wanted this to focus on the date and it does.

I think Will is more incharacter than I originally thought the only thing OOC, in my opinion, is his instant sexual attraction to Hannibal (they have only known each other a week) as I am sticking with the idea that he is pretty much heterosexual but doesn't have a whole load of experience because him and people don't get on too well :)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Walking through the courtyard Will finds himself stood on a large stone terrace. At the sight before him the knots in his shoulders dissolve, his breathing flows gently in and out and his eyes grow heavy begging to close. He feels at peace here, between the perfect balance of an expanse of blue sky and a green, well tended lawn, birds are singing and some where bees are busy about their work. He has stepped into another world, somewhere far away from the troubles of his own, surely here nothing bad could ever happen. The thought that this could not possibly exist in Virginia drifts across Will’s mind and like a solitary cloud on a summer’s day floats away. As he surveys the garden his eyes come to rest on a hammock hung up between two sturdy trees, he imagines himself curled up, book on lap, sleeping. The insomniac FBI agent is sorely tempted to ask his acquaintance ... friend ... host, Will settles on friend, if he could spend the night in it, he’s sure he’d sleep soundly.

And then he is in a stream, his legs battered on all sides, not by water and boulders but dogs, ten to be exact. He is carried along on a tide of excitement as the normally well behaved group leap, run and bounce against each other as they rush down a staircase. Unlike Will they did not take the time to admire the view. His right foot is dangerously close to the edge and

he just manages to stop himself toppling down the first step when he notices Hannibal leaning against a balustrade, well out of the way of rampaging fur, observing.

“Find something amusing?” asks Will without a pause for thought. No sooner has he spoke then he is quite frankly astonished that his larynx hasn’t been cut by the sharpness of the tone accompanying his words. He doesn’t like being watched, it unsettles him, makes him feel like prey like the victims he reanimates at crime scenes. All his tiredness, anxiety and annoyance concentrates into his penchant for verbal assaults and sometimes he just can’t stop himself. Normally its in retaliation to, or a first strike against, a perceived threat but he doesn’t have that excuse here. *Fuck*, he thinks, *he had wanted to make a good impression for a change and not just be some man on the verge of a nervous breakdown.*

Fortunately, if the sparkle in Hannibal’s eyes is anything to go by he’s more amused by Will’s outburst than by any potential calamity the dogs may have caused. “The dogs did not seem to present any immediate danger,” explains Hannibal with the sort of smile Will is convinced has brought many a lover to the man’s bed, “except perhaps to your trousers.”

Following the dark amber eyes Will looks to his trouser legs, they are now more dog hair and drool than item of clothing. “And” adds Hannibal, “I was considering the best place to start our tour,” as he walks towards Will not a hair out of place.

Tour would be the right word, from what Will is able to see the place is extensive, at any minute he’s expecting Hannibal to ask him for the price of admission. From where he is stood, Will looks out over a lawn framed on either side by a path made from small, light grey stones. At the opposite end to where they are now, is another set of steps leading down to a hedge maze with a fountain as the centrepiece and beyond that more lawn. Off shoots from the path lead into a wooded area running the perimeter of the garden, what is beyond that cannot be seen.

The dogs have dispersed across the lawn, some intrepid ones accompanying Cain into the maze. All, that is except one, a little Springer Spaniel, she is standing on her back legs, front paws pressing into Will’s thigh, looking at him with wide, light amber eyes, her face minutely swaying as her tail wags. He gives her long wavy ears a stroke as he explains to Hannibal, “This is Bluebell, our latest addition. I found her a few days ago, she prefers human’s to dogs.” Will stops himself from adding, ‘I don’t know why.’

Instead he makes a suggestion, “Why don’t we start with your favourite place.”

Hannibal’s face softens and he gives a pleased smile, “This way then,” he guides Will, with a hand to his lower back, down the steps then turns right on the path, Bluebell follows at their heels.

It’s a relief, not to mention a surprise, for Will to have said the right thing and for it not to sound like he’s demanding an important piece of information to reconstruct a murder. Usually its only serial killers and their victims he is interested in knowing more about, not normal people like Hannibal. He’s the first to admit he’s a bit out of practice at being social able.

Will places his fingers in his mouth and whistles, dogs come running, this time both men step to the side allowing the furry bodies to charge by. Seeming to know where they are going

Cain and Abel are out front leading the way up a slope and disappearing through trees. Low hanging branch are held aside by Hannibal allowing Will to reach the end of the path first and what he sees makes him smile, an orchard, a small one with about 14 trees. As they walk through them, heading towards a red brick wall, Will is disappointed that the fruits are not yet mature enough to eat. *Another time*, he thinks inviting himself back. The wall itself is high, too high to see what it guards, as Hannibal opens a set of wrought iron gates, he says, "Please come in Will, this is my favourite place."

Will steps towards the gates, then remembering the little spaniel close to his heels hesitates, reading his mind Hannibal says, "Why doesn't Bluebell come in with us, the rest of the dogs can play in the orchard its a great place for chase games."

As he slips past Hannibal, who is holding the gate, Will is acutely aware they are only centimetres apart, he keeps his head down and disguises his nerves by asking Bluebell if she is having a nice time, she, of course, wags her tail even harder.

Of course it would be this, he thinks as he lifts his head and sees row after row of vegetables.

Hannibal leads the way through the kitchen garden, and although Will wouldn't think it possible the other man becomes even more relaxed and free with his smiles.

Will would not describe himself as a gardener, but Hannibal's enthusiasm is infectious and he finds himself enjoying listening to talk of the right soil conditions for happy plants, which flowers attract beneficial insects and crop rotation.

"Here, catch" says Hannibal throwing Will a tomato, "We grow all our vegetables for our dishes."

Will bites into the red, crunchy fruit, juice runs down the corner of his mouth, he wipes it away with the back of his hand, "Hmm, that's really nice."

"I'm very careful what I put into my body and you cant get much better than home grown."

Will would have to agree with that, although most of his food grows on the supermarket shelf. He is pleased, even if it was more by chance than any degree of social skill, to have asked to start here. Seeing the love and care Hannibal has for this garden makes him seem more human and not just some imaginary, perfect being created by the mind of a troubled man on a drunken night.

With the intention of gathering the dogs they exit the walled garden through the same gates they entered. One dog, his ears rolled forward and mouth open, is sat waiting for them, Will ruffles his ears, "Good boy Winston."

"If I had known he would be waiting for you he could have come inside with us."

"He's not here for me, he wants to make sure Bluebell is okay, he's a big brother for new arrivals."

The two dogs sniff each others muzzles then keeping his front legs out Winston stretches back, his chest kept close to the ground, inviting the Springer to play. Bluebell gives a little high pitched screech in her big brother's face, sniffs him again, gives a little bow of her own and runs off turning to ensure she has the golden brown haired dog's attention.

"Do you rehome any of the strays you find?" enquires Hannibal as he leads the way along a path skirting the kitchen garden's wall.

"I try to," answers Will checking to see where the dogs are, all are present and accounted for.

"I expect its difficult to find good homes," says Hannibal although he doesn't need to be a mind reader to see Will doesn't try too hard.

"Yes, it is," replies Will, his head turning quickly as Rufus, a Labrador, stops bumbling about and with a quickness belying his eight years disappears through some shrubs. "I take it there is some water through there, " he says nodding in the direction of plants currently being trampled under paws.

"Yes, but rather than following the same route as Rufus I suggest we head to the more human size exit over there." Hannibal says pointing to a gap between two trees.

They emerge to a river, the slow running water sparkles in the afternoon sun smooth pebbles visible underneath. A green sloping bank provides easy access for the dogs, Rufus is the first to launch himself in his head visible as he paddles, Winston follows soon after. Buster and some of the smaller dogs play fight on the edge, everyone is enjoying themselves.

"You are welcome to bring your fishing gear," says Hannibal as they head towards a hump backed stone bridge, ivy has claimed much of It.

"I'd like that," responds Will. With or without the inducement of fishing he'd very much like to come back.

Dropping behind Hannibal Will scans the ground for sticks, not too fat and not too thin, he finds several and snaps them to roughly equal lengths. Looking up he sees Hannibal stood with a slightly furrowed brow wondering what the hell he is doing.

"Pooh sticks?" Will says, holding up his hand with the sticks, as if that will explain everything.

Hannibal gives a blank stare and shakes his head.

"Did no one ever read, 'The House at Pooh Corner' to you when you were a kid?"

"No, I'm afraid not. Maybe you can read it to me sometime."

Unbidden a picture of Hannibal, all long limbs and muscle, dressed in Winnie the Pooh pyjamas and tucked up in a Bat Car bed comes to the forefront of Will's mind he laughs, quickly regretting it when he sees the older man's face tense minutely.

“Oh, I’m sorry,” says Will, “I thought you were joking.” No matter how hard he tries Will can’t imagine Hannibal as a small, vulnerable child, he tries, but no, he is always a statuesque adult.

“I’d like to know more about the things you enjoy.” Hannibal says flatly, *is that so bad?*

“Well, its a kids book, but yeah, if you would like me to I’d be happy to read it.” Will smiles tentatively, *Have I fucked this, whatever this is, up already?*

“Good, may be over dinner, Thursday night?”

Will’s smile widens in response to the one on Hannibal’s lips, “Yeah, OK,” he agrees.

Hannibal is keen, an unusual experience for Will Graham he’s a little panicked, *What am I getting myself in to?* but the feeling is gone just as quickly as it arrived.

*“*Will?” “Pooh sticks?”

Will jerks a little as he is pulled out off his thoughts, “Yeah, here,” says Will handing over a stick. “We need to stand on the bridge facing upstream, holding the sticks over the side at the same height.” The FBI agent looks around to check no one is watching the two grown men before he continues with the instructions, “We open our palms, at the same time. Whose ever comes through first wins.” He looks at Hannibal to underline the importance of the next sentence, “We do not throw the stick.”

“I understand,” nods Hannibal with as much seriousness as a priest taking confession.

Hanging over the side of the bridge they drop the sticks. Hannibal is jostled out the way by Will who gets to the other side first and see’s his stick win.

“Best of three?” Hannibal proposes.

“Yeah, sure,” says Will with a grin, boyish excitement gleaming in his eyes.

Having learned the tactic from Will, Hannibal is definitely the best jostler, getting to the other side quicker, he is still however the loser 2:1. A loser his friend might be but Will can’t help notice his hair looks better a little ruffled rather than perfectly gelled.

All the dogs join them as they finally cross over the bridge, the trees on this side are denser and form a thicker canopy, their branches meeting in the middle like the rafters of a church roof.

This time it is Hannibal who seems to search the undergrowth for something before stooping down, and, a minute or so later, presents Will with one of two perfect Dandelion clocks.

“Make a wish, Will,” says Hannibal with a slight bow.

A dusty pink blush rises from under Will’s shirt and up his neck, he is given the weed with all the intensity of a single red rose. Will dutifully puts his lips together and blows, averting his eyes from Hannibal’s gaze, he makes a wish, one he keeps private. The older man makes his

wish also, and in the moment that follows Will is sure he is about to be kissed and he is equally certain he needs to move away, quick. He has spent all week thinking about Hannibal, was ridiculously excited at the prospect of seeing him and in his presence he is a moth, albeit a rather temperamental moth, to the flame. There in lies the problem. Up until he walked into the Stag's Head, a week ago, Will's libido, such as it is, has been confined to women, yet here he is having a romantic walk with a man having already agreed to dine with him in a few days time. Will is confused to put it mildly, but he knows it is not Hannibal's fault, so he needs to be tactful.

Without warning or tact, Will turns and heads off in the direction of what he thinks is a hand, a very pale, cold looking hand. Fearless Buster sees him and runs ahead, Cain following. Set back in a dark and damp part of the wood the sculpture is greened by velvet moss covering most of the lower portion of the body. The creature, for that would be the best way to describe it, is smaller than most adult humans standing about three feet high. Will circles the sculpture inspecting it, hands behind his back he peers at it in the same way someone might an ancient artefact or a painting by an old master. Large bee- like eyes, a slim protruding nose and tendrils rising up from its head are easily discernible, there are wings on its back, not benign fairy wings but skeletal-like with sharp pointed ends, its finger nails are equally pointed like fine daggers. This is not the prettiest garden ornament Will has seen.

"It's a little odd don't you think?" Will says absentmindedly to Cain who has taken up sentry duty in front of the creature. Buster doesn't care, cocking his leg up he pisses on its feet.

Will chuckles, "So that's what you think to it."

It is not so much the physical characteristics which draw Will's interest but it stance as a witness to a great horror it could not escape. It is leaning forward slightly at the shoulders, hands positioned up in futile defensive, the mouth caught in open anguish. Will wants to touch this little bit of horror, but he is unable to, it is repulsive to him, so cold he shivers at the thought it might contaminate his soul. He doesn't give much thought to his soul, he isn't sure he, or any human, has one, but here and now looking at the creature he has a sure and certain belief that he does. He is drawn however to take a closer look, being careful not to touch, at an object held in a gnarled hand; Its a finely detailed feather.

On the periphery of his awareness Will feels Hannibal's presence it draws him back from the cold and dark to the warmth. He hadn't realised how tense he was until he unclenches his jaw, his breathing returns to normal and all thoughts of his soul and its contamination leave him, Will smiles.

Catching Hannibal's eye for a split second Will feels the need to apologise, "I'm sorry," he says, "I saw this and, well, my mind played tricks."

Hannibal fixes his gaze on the statue, the slight narrowing of eyes easily missed by anyone except the FBI profiler. "I rarely come this way and I have to admit I have left it to rot," says Hannibal by way of explanation, "it's a very old thing." Turning his back on the creature Hannibal places his arm lightly on Will's shoulder "Come, lets move on, its too nice a day to be standing in the shade, and I'm sure you're hungry."

Will looks back once as he leaves, its a dark, damp spot and maybe the statute has absorbed some of that atmosphere over the years. He cant help but wonder though at the state of the statue, discarded, when everything else is so lovingly taken care of, a gift from a old lover, he wonders, but that seems too banal an answer.

They are now on the path opposite to where they started their tour. Hannibal surely cant manage all this on his own, thinks Will, but he hasn't seen any gardeners nor bar staff for that matter.

"Do you employ any staff, its a big place to manage on your own?"

"They are around, but they know when to be invisible."

The two men fall quiet and into step with one another, just the scrunch of stones under foot. Risking a glance Will contemplates Hannibal's silvery, blond hair and high cheekbones confidence and authority is etched on his face. How easy it would be to get lost in this man, it wouldn't feel overwhelming more akin to connecting to another part of himself.

"This way," says Hannibal as his eyes come to meet and hold Wills. Intoxicating...that's what it feels like to be the focus of those dark amber eyes. A wave of relaxation and happiness rolls through Will, normally unaccustomed to both it feels really, really good. Taking a step forward he has an urge to lick ... *lick*, *what the* ... Will drops his eyes down to find Bluebell currently scrambling at his arm, don't mind him, she says with all her doggy enthusiasm, pay attention to me. Saved by the dog, Will thinks, whilst giving her a kiss on the head.

They turn off the path, walk along a grassy corridor framed on either side by beds of brightly coloured plants and head towards a small set of steps. Although not as grand as some of the other larger garden staircases, a high, well maintained hedge runs across framing the steps with a perfect arch, beyond that there is another hedge and another arch. From the second arch a set of trees can be seen rising above a hut like structure, although 'hut' is an inadequate description. Its more like a glass house or an old fashioned conservatory, floor to ceiling arched windows sit in a white wooden frame, folding doors stand open at the front and the back, allowing a breeze to pass through. Inside are two white sofas, a low coffee table and a chest of draws tucked away to one side, a splash of colour is added by a few well placed cushions and rugs.

Will would happily spend the rest of the afternoon on one of the sofa's, looking out over a large rectangular pond to the front of the summer house. Hannibal has other ideas, in front of the pond is a red and blue picnic blanket with a wicker hamper and a silver champagne bucket, if Will hadn't already guessed it he would by now be in no doubt he, and not just his dogs, is on a date. There is also a stack of dog bowls, *can this man get any more thoughtful,* Will thinks.

"Is there any fish in that pond?" Will asks Hannibal.

"Thankfully, no," Hannibal replies as he unpacks the contents of the hamper. He pauses and looks up just as Rufus and Winston leap, front and back legs stretched out into the water. "Your boys can enjoy themselves, no harm done," he says.

The first things Hannibal unpacks are elegant and expensive looking plates and tea cups, followed by champagne flutes and cutlery. Will makes a mental note to buy some matching crockery before he invites Hannibal to his house and oh, a spring clean is necessary. Hannibal then unpacks food, so much food that Will isn't sure how it all got in the hamper, he picks up a small Tupperware box and opens it to find biscuits and some Blueberry muffins. He should wait and eat properly but he cant resist a sample of the muffin, "these are very nice," he says taking another bite.

Hannibal gives him an admonishing look, "Those, my dear Will, are for the dogs."

"Oh," he says grinning, then takes a look at the last piece of his muffin and pops it in his mouth anyway, "I'm looking forward to eating what you have prepared for us humans."

The smell of food is in the air and doggy noses start to twitch. Winston scrambles to the edge of the pond, pulls himself out and lollops over to the picnic blanket closely followed by Rufus. Waves ripple across fur as they shakes themselves sending cascades of tiny droplets into an arch overhead and onto everyone and everything in the vicinity. Will shakes his own head, but isn't too bothered its only water and it'll dry soon enough.

Luckily the human food did better than Will receiving only a light smattering hardly noticeable really, though for future reference, he notes, it would make more sense to feed the dogs first.

"A herd of hungry dogs heading our way," warns Will grinning, his pack are normally well behaved but this is like a little holiday for them, so he's cutting them some slack.

More dogs line up next to Winston and Rufus, tails wagging tongues hanging out in expectation. Abel slinks over body low, head down, he knows he is being naughty asking for food, his brother has other priorities and is still happily galloping around with a ball in his mouth, oblivious.

Hannibal crouches down and strokes the giant black dog's head, tickling him behind the ears, "It's okay, everyone is having a picnic today." Each dog is given a bowl along with some small chunks of meat and a biscuit and muffin.

Whilst the furry friends eat Will and Hannibal help themselves to their own food filling their plates with smoked salmon and salad, and fresh bread from a little wicker basket.

"Is this Salmon from your own stream," asks Will, thinking about how soon he can come back and fish.

Hannibal nods, "Yes" he replies only speaking when he has swallowed his food, "perhaps another time you may like to catch your own lunch."

"I'd be happy to. I'll cook it as well, I warn you I'm no chef but its something I can do well."

For later there is a selection of cheeses on a cheeseboard and of course, it goes almost without saying, strawberries and cream. Chocolate pralines also sit in a satin lined box, Will

suspects these were hand made by Hannibal earlier in the day, they melt on the tongue, perfect. All in all it's certainly the best picnic Will has ever been on, champagne glass in hand he lies back on the blanket. There are a few clouds up above, not many but he can make out what look to be a pair of ears and a fluffy tail, "look," he says pointing, "that looks like a rabbit, see the long ears and curve of its back."

Hannibal gives a little huff, "Ah, so it does."

Most of the dogs have gone back to playing but a few doze quietly nearby, Will thinks that seems like a good idea and closes his eyes. He feels Muppet's long, silken hair and starts to stroke the edges, twirling it in his fingers, is a nice way to fall asleep.

"Oh," says Will pulling himself up quickly, his dogs most certainly do not use hair product, "I'm sorry I thought you were Muppet," looking around he sees the small dog playing on the other side of the pond.

"I'm not sorry," says Hannibal claiming eye contact. Will barely registers Hannibal's forward momentum until one chaste kiss then another are pressed on his lips; it feels good. Melting under the warmth of Hannibal's mouth Will capitulates, his lips part, he kisses back. Tentative kisses deepen as their body's shift and realign until they fit together perfectly, like missing pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. Moving downwards Hannibal's tongue follows the path of his fingers as they slip buttons through holes, Will shivers.

What starts in pleasure is transformed by a touch of coldness, a spark of terror, not Will's own but from someone or something else. It jolts him, some part of his mind, not yet under the hazy spell of the other man, forces him to focus and move, escape. His hands come up, he shoves the body covering him off, scrambles up until he is stood, face turned away. Something isn't right he's not sure what, his rational mind seeks answers, *maybe he's not over the last crime scene, this is all a bit fast and when did he start finding men attractive*.

Over the rapid beating of his heart Will hears his name being called. It would be easier if he pretended he hadn't noticed the uncertainty in the voice, that the man he has just ...rejected, really that's the only way to describe it, can just shrug it off as easily as he might an insult from a drunk customer.

Will turns around, "I, err," *need to be an adult about this,* he thinks. He clears his throat intending to start again, he looks at Hannibal and sees a look of, *Oh god... hurt,* flicker across the man's face.

"It's OK Will, its my fault, I thought...," whatever emotion Hannibal felt is gone behind replaced by a placid expression of acceptance.

Settling down onto his haunches, Will decides honesty rather than panicked bluster is the best approach, "I like you I really do," he stops for a moment considers his words not wanting to sound like he's giving the, 'its not you, its me,' speech. "I enjoyed the kiss," he says with a small smile, "its just I'm not used to..."

"Men?"

“Anyone,” he blushes a little, his eyes wander to a tree behind Hannibal, its leaves are very green, *honesty,* “but yeah men in particular.” It wasn’t the whole truth but it was a good portion of it. He couldn’t really say, *Oh yeah and terror, like someone being suffocated. Jesus my brain and its fucking peculiarities*.

“Admittedly I was getting a bit carried away,” says Hannibal in his own spirit of honesty.

“Do you want me to go?” asks Will, he would if the situation was reversed.

“No, not unless you want to,” replies Hannibal as he lies back down and points at a cloud, “That one there it looks like a squirrel, see the ears and how the tail curls up.”

Will reclaiming his spot on the rug looks to where Hannibal is pointing, “Huh, yeah it does.”

Chapter End Notes

Sorry I couldn't let them have a proper good kiss etc - it wouldn't fit with the next fic and also I've never written any smut, and I would need to read (who am I kidding re-read) a whole load of smut, for research purposes, before attempting to write anything, if that is the way this series goes (I'm not sure at the moment).

Yes, I know, House at Pooh Corner, I thought about Pooh sticks then couldn't resist including it, but If you are the master of a universe no one might have read you a bed time story or played childish games with you so its cute and a very human thing to do and Hannibal likes it :)

Yes thats is a bit of a spoiler Hannibal is the master of his supernatural universe and not just a mild mannered publican

Chapter 3

Chapter Summary

Things take a turn for the worst thanks to Freddie Lounds.

Chapter Notes

Just to remind readers (or if you haven't read pub at the end of the road) Freddie is a supernatural being

See the end of the chapter for more notes

It's an hour or so later that Will decides its time to be heading home. The two men, and their ten dogs, start back along the path talking about nothing in particular, once again they fall into step with each other. Passing the maze Will agrees to Hannibal's suggestion that on his next visit they explore it; the FBI agent is surprised and not a little happy to be invited back.

They are almost at the stone terrace when a woman comes down the steps, walking quickly towards them, an employee? Will queries to himself.

"Miss Lounds, you are not meant to be back here," says Hannibal putting himself between Freddie Lounds and Will. She comes forward anyway trying to side step Hannibal to get a better view of Will.

"I thought I could smell him, he is lovely isn't he." She looks really pleased with herself, she inhales savouring his scent, "Oh, you've not quite claimed him yet, can I share, pretty please." She preens at Hannibal, falsely fluttering her eye lashes.

Hannibal glances at Will and sees, 'What the fuck is going on' telegraphed loudly on the man's face. "Miss Lounds, please leave or I will have to force you to," she turn's to go but not before winking at the FBI agent.

"No one claims me," shouts Will it takes all his resolve not to walk after her and grab hold of her arm, "What do you think I am a lost puppy at a shelter?" Turning to Hannibal, "And that is Freddie Lounds, why the hell didn't I recognise her? Did you fucking drug me or something?"

Will whistles his dogs and doesn't look back as he heads across the terrace towards the courtyard and the way back to his house in Wolf Trap.

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Hannibal sits in one of the two chairs by the fire he stares at the other one which should have, would have, been filled by Will if not for a certain red head.

“Well boys,” he says looking at Cain and Abel, “I had meant this to be a day for creating positive associations, everything was going well until Miss Lounds arrived. What is to be done about her?”

Rob lands on the arm rest, Abel looks at him growls then thinks better of it when the bird turns its beak in his direction.

“Rob, I need you to help Will get home, he’ll have been wandering for a while in the woods, no doubt working himself up. You must keep an eye on him, he’ll get visitors, tell me who they are. And Rob, no one is to touch him.”

Chapter End Notes

The scent and claiming stuff is not Omega verse, its something else

Will did not recognise Freddie the night he was at the Stag's head (in Pub at the end of the Road) but he should have done.

In the next fic we find out who Hannibal is and how he and Will are connected

End Notes

This is literally just the intro chapter and I intend in the next chapter the dogs will play and Will and Hanni will have a picnic with a summerhouse, a picnic hamper, strawberries, champagne, home-made doggy biscuits and some light flirting.

But if your looking for a plot on this one, go somewhere else - its just fluff, with a bit of plot thrown in at the end :)

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